



*New-Alresford in Hampshire,
24000 l. Loss by Fire.*



WILLIAM and MARY, by the Grace of God, King and Queen of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Defenders of the Faith, &c. To all and Singular Archbishops, Bishops, Archdeacons, Deans, and their Officials, Parsons, Vicars, Curates, and all other Spiritual Persons: And also to all Justices of the Peace, Mayors, Sheriffs, Bayliffs, Constables, Church-Wardens, Chapel-Wardens, Headboroughs, Collectors for the Poor, and their Overseers: And also to all Officers of Cities, Boroughs, and Towns Corporate; and to all other our Officers, Ministers, and Subjects, whatsoever they be, as well within Liberties as without, to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting:

Whereas We are credibly given to understand, by a Certificate made at the General Quarter-Sessions of the Peace holden (by Adjournment) at the Castle of Winchester, in Our County of Southampton, on the Fourth day of June, in the First Year of Our Reign, under the Hands and Seals of Our Trusty and Well-beloved Sir Charles Windham Knight; Thomas Fervoise Senior, Charles Morley, Edward Chute, Francis Dickins, and Thomas Fervoise Junior, Esquires, Justices of the Peace for Our said County; That upon the First day of May last past, there happened a Sudden and most Dreadful Fire in the Borough of New-Alresford in Our said County of Southampton, which, by the violence and boistroufness of the Wind, burnt so furiously, That, in or about the space of Three Hours, it consumed the Dwelling-Houses of above One hundred and seventeen Families, with the Ware-houses, Out-houses, Barns, and Stables, thereunto belonging; together with great quantities of Wares, Goods, and Householdstuff, and also the Church, Chancel and Market-house of the said Borough, to the utter Undoing of the Inhabitants of the said Place, and Impoverishing the Country adjacent through the Decay of Trade, it being a very great and considerable Market-Town; the Damage sustained thereby amounting to above Twenty four thousand Pounds, as appeared to Our said Justices of the Peace, not only by the Oaths of several Inhabitants of the said Borough, but also by the Oaths of divers Carpenters, Bricklayers, Plumbers, and Smiths, who viewed and valued the same; so that the poor Sufferers and their Families, who (before this extraordinary Accident) were always ready and willing to Relieve the Necessities of others, are now (by reason of this sudden Calamity) become great Objects of Charity themselves, and most of them must Languish under lamentable and heavy Pressures, if not Relieved by the Charitable Help of tender-hearted and well-disposed Christians.

And therefore, have humbly besought Us, to commiserate their sad Condition, and to grant unto them Our Gracious Letters Patents under Our Great Seal of England, to License and Authorize them to Ask and Receive the Alms and Charitable Benevolence of all Our Loving Subjects, within Our Kingdom of England, and Dominion of Wales, unto which their Humble Request We have Condescended, and do in a peculiar and especial manner Recommend them to the Pious and Charitable Thoughts and Considerations of Our said Loving Subjects; not doubting, but when their Distressed Condition shall be made known, they will be touched with a Fellow-feeling of their Brethren's Affliction, and bountifully Contribute to their Relief.

Know ye therefore, That, of Our Royal Favour, and Princely Compassion, We have given and granted, and by these Our Letters Patents under Our Great Seal of England, do give and grant unto the said poor Sufferers of New-Alresford aforesaid, and to their Deputy and Deputies, the Bearer and Bearers hereof, Authorized and Deputed in that behalf, as afterwards in these Presents is appointed, full Power, Licence and Authority, to ask, gather, receive, and take, the Alms and Charitable Benevolence of all Our Loving Subjects, not only Householders, but also Servants, Strangers, and others, in all and every the Counties, Cities, Cinque-Ports, Towns Corporate, Universities, Boroughs, Priviledged-places, Parishes, Chapelries, Towns, Villages, Hamlets, and all other places whatsoever, within Our Kingdom of England, Dominion of Wales, and Town of Berwick upon Tweed, towards the Support and Relief of the said poor distressed Sufferers.

Wherefore, We Require and Command you, and every of you, That at such time and times as the Deputy and Deputies, the Bearer and Bearers hereof, shall Come and Repair to any of your Churches, Chapels, or Congregations, to Ask and Receive the Alms, and Charitable Benevolence of Our said Loving Subjects, quietly to permit and suffer them so to do, without any manner your Lets or Contradictions: And you the said Parsons, Vicars, and Curates, upon some Lords Day, within one Month after these Our Letters Patents shall be produced, and the true Copies thereof tendred unto you, or the said Church-Wardens or Chapel-Wardens respectively, shall deliberately and affectionately Publish and Declare the Tenor of the same unto Our said Loving Subjects. And earnestly Exhort, Persuade and stir them up, to extend their Liberal Contributions towards the said Great Losses, and not to look upon it as an ordinary Brief.

And for the better and more effectual Collecting thereof, you the said Church-Wardens, Chapel-Wardens, Collectors for the Poor, and their Overseers, respectively, are to go from House to House upon the Week days next following, after the Publication of these Presents, to Collect the Alms of Our said Loving Subjects; and the Sum or Sums of Money so respectively Collected by virtue of these Presents, to Endorse upon these Our Letters Patents, or the said Copies, in Words at length, and not in Figures: Together also with the Names of the Counties, Cities, Towns, Parishes, Universities, and Chapelries respectively, wherein, and the time when, such Sums were gathered; which Endorsements are to be Subscribed by the Ministers and your Selves, and also to be entred into your Books of Accounts for the said Parishes and Chapelries respectively: And you are also to deliver the said Monies, with all the said Copies, unto the said Bearer and Bearers hereof, (Authorized as herein is appointed) whensoever you shall be by them, or any of them, thereunto required; but to no other Person or Persons whatsoever, whose Receiving thereof, together with their or any of their Acquittance or Acquittances, shall be your sufficient Discharge for so doing.

Which said Bearer and Bearers hereof are hereby willed and required, upon Receipt of the said Monies, forthwith to Pay the same, and deliver all the said Copies unto Our Right Trusty and Right Well-beloved Cousin and Counsellor Charles Duke of Bolton, Our Right Trusty and Well-beloved Charles Marquess of Winchester, the Right Reverend Fathers in God the Lord Bishop of London, and the Lord Bishop of Winchester; Sir Nicholas Stuart, and Sir Hugh Stewkley, Baronets; Sir Robert Henly, and Sir Charles Windham, Knights; Colonel Richard Norton; Dr. John Nicholas Warden of Winton-College; William Harrison, and Henry Hawkins, Doctors in Divinity; John Venables, George Bridges, and Henry Dawly, Esquires; Henry Perrin Doctor in Physick, and William Needham Bachelor in Divinity; whom We do hereby Constitute and Appoint to be Receivers and Trustees of the said Charity, with full Power to them, or any five or more of them, (they having first signified the Time and Place of their Meeting to the major part of the said Trustees) as well to depute such Person and Persons as they shall think fit to Receive the said Money so Collected, and to give sufficient Discharges for the same; as also to distribute the same amongst the poor Sufferers, in such Proportion to their several Losses, as to them shall seem just and equal; and to make such Allowances to the Collectors and Receivers of the said Monies, as they in their discretions shall think fit.

And Lastly, Our Will and Pleasure is, That no Person or Persons whatsoever shall Collect or Receive the said Money of or from the Church-Wardens, Chapel-Wardens, Collectors for the Poor, and their Overseers, but such only as shall be Appointed and Authorized so to do, by Deputation under the Hands and Seals of the above-named Receivers and Trustees, or any five or more of them: Any Law, Statute, Act, Ordinance, or Provision, heretofore made to the contrary hereof, in any wise notwithstanding. **In Witness** whereof, We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patents, and to continue for One Year from Michaelmas next ensuing the Date hereof, and no longer. **Witness** Our Selves at Westminster the Two and twentieth Day of June, in the First Year of Our Reign.

GOD Save the KING and QUEEN.

Full.

All Ministers and Church-Wardens are desired to pursue the Directions in this, and all other Briefs, about Entering in their Parish Books the Sums Collected to each Brief; it being intended to have them Inspected once a Year at least, thereby to discover, if any Collectors aliter the Endorsement, or omit to Return the Briefs received from the respective Parishes.

THE Church-wardens, &c. are earnestly desired,
That, in Charity to the Poor Sufferers, they
would be so kind as to return this Brief, together with
the Money thereupon Collected, (the Sum being En-
dorsed) into the Hands of the Register of that Arch-
Deacon, within the Compts of whose Jurisdiction
they dwell, at, or before, the next *Easter*-Visitation. And
the said Registers Acquittance shall be a full Discharge.

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for the poor

Drury Lane

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